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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 DOHA 000605

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PARM](#) [KNNP](#) [MNUC](#) [IR](#) [QA](#)
SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER ON GENEVA TALKS ON IRAN: WE'RE
HAPPY, TOO EARLY FOR OPTIMISM

REF: A. SECSTATE 100153
[1](#)B. DOHA 422

Classified By: Ambassador Joseph E. LeBaron for reasons 1.4 (b and d).

(C) KEY POINTS

-- Ambassador, UK Ambassador John Hawkins, and French CDA
Alain Peuclet met with Qatar's Prime Minister on Oct. 5 to
solicit Qatar's support for the P5 1 position on Iran.

-- The Prime Minister, Shaykh Hamad bin Jassim, urged the
P5 1 to stick with a timetable for Iranian cooperation.
"This is the key. Otherwise with Iran it will go on
forever." But he also predicted that Iran would violate any
deadline by 2-3 months, just to demonstrate that it would not
be held to a deadline.

-- The Prime Minister commented that either he or the Amir
might visit Tehran soon. Ambassador encouraged the Prime
Minister to use the trip, if it occurred, to weigh in with
Iran in support of the P5 1 position. Shaykh Hamad said
Qatar would.

-- The Prime Minister said that the P5 1 must stand together
with Iran's neighbors and speak with one voice. Iran would
perceive any division or lack of coordination as a sign of
weakness and seek to exploit it, he said.

-- Progress toward Middle East Peace would also "take away
many cards from Iran's hand," in the Prime Minister's
view.

(C) COMMENTS

-- The Prime Minister neither mentioned nor alluded to the
possibility of a formal post-Ramadan visit to Iran by Shaykh
Tamim, the Heir Apparent. Iran's Ambassador to Qatar
announced just such a visit to the local media several weeks
ago. But the GOQ still has not confirmed a Tamim visit.

-- If any of these three top Qatari leaders visit Tehran
soon, the visit should be viewed as a continuation of the
series of recent high level visits between Iran and Qatar
(reftels).

-- These visits parallel a similar increase in visits to the
United States by senior Qatari officials. But it is too
early to conclude that the Qataris are following a deliberate
policy of balancing visits to Iran and the United States.
There are simply too many possible factors influencing the
pace and timing of all these visits to draw firm conclusions
about Qatar's foreign policy towards engaging Iran and the

United States.

End Key Points and Comments.

¶1. (C) On October 5, Ambassador, accompanied by UK Ambassador John Hawkins and French CDA Alain Peuclet, met with Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad bin Jassim Al Thani. The purpose of the meeting was to deliver the demarche requests each had received concerning the recent discovery of a covert uranium processing plant near Qom, Iran (Ref A). The joint format was at the request of the UK Ambassador, acting on instructions from Her Majesty's Government.

¶2. (C) The three impressed upon the PM the seriousness of the latest discovery and stressed that the time had arrived for difficult decisions, even in light of the hopeful outcome of the October 1 meetings in Geneva. They stressed that the goal remains to elicit Iranian cooperation, but otherwise greater international resources must be brought to bear on Iran in response to its nuclear ambitions. They sought the support of Qatar in pursuit of this goal, and asked the PM his views on next steps.

¶3. (C) The PM replied that the possibility of a visit to Tehran, either by himself or Amir Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, was under active consideration. He agreed that one of the goals of such a visit would be to encourage cooperation by the Iranian government, and that the tone of their discussions would be frank. He said they would point out to

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the Iranians that Qatar tolerated "a great deal of international pressure" over its ties to Iran, but that Qatar's objective was a peaceful resolution, and that meant that Iran should cooperate. He said that the message would be critical, but he wondered if it would be he who would deliver it, adding half-jokingly that the Iranians consider him to be a Western "agent."

¶4. (C) The PM praised President Obama's public response to the outcome of the Geneva talks. Noting that "the Iranian negotiators are clever, perhaps too clever, and this could result in failure. What President Obama said about being encouraged but not letting the negotiations go on forever is important. There must be a timetable", stressed Shaykh Hamad, "otherwise with Iran it will go on forever." When reminded that the President had established the end of the year as the deadline, the PM stated that Iran did not like timetables, and would act, if at all, in January or February "to show you that they are not bound by your timetables."

¶5. (C) Turning to Iranian President Ahmedinejad, the Prime Minister reminded Ambassador of the opinion he shared with A/S Jeffrey Feltman at their June 16 meeting (Ref B): it is better to deal with him than to believe that progress could be better made with another leader, which could lead to greater disappointment down the road.

¶6. (C) The PM stressed that the P5 plus one and Iran's neighbors are in the same boat and must speak with one voice. There can be no conflicting signals, he warned, or else Iran will take encouragement from the division, and seeing it as a sign of weakness, move to exploit it. He said that in building regional consensus toward Iran, progress toward Middle East Peace would "take away many cards from Iran's hand." He reiterated that he was happy with the outcome of Geneva, but that it was too early for optimism. A favorable solution to the Iranian nuclear issue, he concluded, would relieve not just the West and Iran's neighbors, but the entire world.
LeBaron